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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/694,212

10/27/2003

Susumu Kawata

17161

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EXAMINER

LEUBECKER, JOHN P

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3739

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

01/09/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/694,212

Applicant(s)

KAWATA, SUSUMU

Examiner

John P. Leubecker

Art Unit

3739

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 October 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 9-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 9-12, 16-19, 23 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 13-15 and 20-22 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on October 12, 2007 has been entered.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 23 is objected to because of the following informalities: in claim 23, line 12, "a connecting means to which the second signal processing means *for* is detachably connected" is awkward. It appears that the word "for" should be deleted. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102 and 103

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 9-12, 16-19, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Adair et al. (U.S. Pat. 5,929,901), either as evidenced by Crump et al. (U.S. Pat. 5,762,555).

Adair et al. discloses an endoscope (10) including an image pick-up device (40) for converting a subject image into an image signal; and a signal processing device (50, Fig.4) including a first signal processor for processing the image signal (any one of 112, 114, 116, 118, 122, 124, Fig.4b), a second signal processor (134, Fig.4b) that implements a signal process of the processed image signal by the first signal processor in accordance with a first television display signal format having a first resolution (NTSC), a first output (57) for outputting to a first display device the image signal processed by the second signal processor and a connector (discussed below); and a signal processing section (60, Fig.4) detachably connected to the connector (discussed below), the signal processing section including a third signal processor (158, Fig. 4) that implements the signal process of the image signal processed by the first signal processor in accordance with a second television signal format having a second resolution (VGA) that is higher than the first resolution, and a second output for outputting to a second display device the processed image signal by the third signal processor (note enumerated but shown by line/arrow labeled "To monitor" adjacent box 60 in Fig.4). Crump et al. evidences that NTSC screen resolutions can be as low as 320x256 and the VGA resolutions can be as high as 640x480 (note col.5, lines 47-54), making the second resolution in Adair capable of being higher than the first resolution.

Adair et al. teaches that the signal processing device (50) and signal processing section (60) are connected together by pin connectors (62, Fig.2b and 3a) (col.6, lines 22-33). By inherent nature of "pin connectors", these connectors, even if attached by means of solder, would be detachable. However, even if Adair et al. contemplated a one-time, permanent attachment (a bond never to be broken) of the signal processing device (50) and signal processing section (60) through the pin connectors (and the Examiner does not believe this is the case), it would have been obvious to the skilled artisan to have alternatively made the connection easily separable. Pin connectors in the electrical arts typically allow a separable connection via a pin/socket arrangement (e.g., removable IC chips typically having pins that plug into corresponding sockets). Since Adair's signal processing section (60) is optional (note col.6, lines 29-33), it would be desirable to provide a separable connection so as to allow for easy implementation of that option. Since separable connectors are well known in the electrical arts and providing one would not change the functioning of the Adair et al. device, the use of the separable connector between the signal processing boards would have yielded predictable results to one of ordinary skill.

As to the remaining claims, the "boards" mentioned when referring to the signal processing circuits (e.g., video processing board 50, supplementary board 60) constitutes a "substrate". Note that in claims that do not recite three signal processors, the second signal processor mentioned above will anticipate the claimed "first signal processor".

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 13-15 and 20-22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 9-24 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US 5954634 A Igarashi; Tsutomu

US 5408270 A Lim; Jae S.

US 5689612 A Abe; Nobuaki

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John P. Leubecker whose telephone number is (571) 272-4769.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 6:00 AM to 2:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda C.M. Dvorak can be reached on (571) 272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/John P. Leubecker/
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3739

jpl